FAIRLESS LOCAL SCHOOLS

Staff Handbook
2026-27

"Soaring to EXCELLENCE Every Day"

Fairless Local School District	
Mission:	Educate and empower Fairless to **SOAR** to **EXCELLENCE!**
Vision Statement:	Fairless is the community where families want to learn, live, work, and grow.

Vision Areas	
1. Learning	Ensure engaging, relevant, and rigorous educational opportunities where all become expert learners.
2. Culture and Climate	Ensure a culture that is safe, supported, and successful for all.
3. Experience	Provide a positive experience where all feel valued.
4. Communication	Provide clear and consistent two-way communication in which all remain informed and have a voice.
5. Resources	Ensure responsible and transparent use of the community's resources to provide an exceptional education for all.

Fairless Local Schools Portrait of a Graduate

Domain 1- **ACADEMICALLY PREPARED**

- Foundational Knowledge - Graduates will have an academic experience that achieves high expectations for each student's individual development.
- Well-Rounded Content - Graduates will have access to a range of options for co-curricular and extracurricular activities that reflect students' interests, goals and learning profiles.

Domain 2 - **RESILIENT INDIVIDUAL**

- Adaptability - Graduates will use their skills, knowledge, and experiences to identify possible solutions for complex problems.
- Growth Mindset - Graduates will embrace challenges and be persistent in their learning.
- Motivated - Graduates will show an eagerness to ask questions and explore beyond what is required; discovering, learning, and understanding.

Domain 3 - **FEARLESS LEARNER**

- Critical thinking - Graduates will develop critical thinking and reasoning skills, problem-solving competencies, and technology proficiency.
- Innovative - Graduates will be self-directed learners, who are flexible with their knowledge and learn as they go, adapt to the situation, and use critical thinking skills.
- Curious - Graduates will ask thoughtful questions, dig deeply into issues, and consider multiple perspectives when tackling problems and developing new processes.

Domain 4 - **PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATOR**

- Intrapersonal skills - Graduates will assume developmentally and age-appropriate responsibility for learning through effective decision-making, goal setting, and time management.
- Effective communication skills - Graduates will clearly, concisely and truthfully articulate their thoughts in verbal and written formats while respecting the targeted audience and other points of view.
- Collaborator - Graduates will work well with others by respecting differences and actively listening in order to practice cooperation and compromise in problem solving.

Domain 5- CARING CITIZEN

- Service Learning - Graduates will engage in community service experiences to help meet societal needs.
- Ethical - Graduates will act with integrity and take responsibility for their actions and decisions.

Directory

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Justin Henry
Mr. Ken Killian
Mr. Charles Snyder
Mr. Jordan Starcher
Mrs. Cathy Soehnlen

DISTRICT OFFICIALS

800 7th Street, SE, Brewster, OH 44613

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(330) 767-3577

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(330) 767-3577

Mrs. Julie Weyandt ……..…Director of Curriculum
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Ms. Val Elder ...Transportation and Facilities Manager
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Enrollment & Registration …… Mrs. Dana Nash
(330) 767-4293

EMIS Coordinator…….……..……Mrs. Nicole Mercer
(330) 767-3577

SCHOOLS & ADMINISTRATION

Fairless High School

Grades 9-12

800 7th Street, SE, Brewster, OH 44613

Mr. Chad Merritt……...Principal
(330) 767-3444

Mrs. Penny DeShields……...Assistant Principal

Mr. Zach Michel …….……..……Athletic Director

Mrs. Kim King…. …….. Secretary

Mrs. Patti Waugh……Student Services Secretary

Mr. Sean McCartney...…….... School Counselor

Mrs. Pam Gerig ……...Receptionist & Attendance

Fairless Middle School

Grades 6-8

11836 Navarre Rd SW, Navarre, OH 44662

Mrs. Natalie Gilkerson…….Principal
(330) 767-4293

Mr. Aaron Sarbaugh …….. Dean of Students

Mrs. Brenda Jennings ……. Secretary

Mrs. Dana Nash ……Secretary

Mrs. LuAnne Frase ……..……. School Counselor

Fairless Elementary School

Grades PreK-5

12000 Navarre Rd SW, Navarre, OH 44662

Mrs. Lori Neuenschwander ….……..Principal
(330) 767-3913

Mr. Adam Amato……..…….. Assistant Principal

……..…… ……. Secretary

Mrs. Madison Strong ……..Attendance

Mrs. Angela Ellifritz …...……School Counselor

DISCLAIMER

Due to space considerations, some of the policies appearing in this handbook are shorter versions of the policies adopted by the Fairless Board of Education and which appear in the Board Policy Manual.

Fairless Local School District

Thank you for adhering to the guidelines explained in the FLSD Staff Handbook. You are held to follow the contract and board policy. FLSD policy and the Ohio Licensure Code of Professional Conduct Standards. If you have any questions about the contract, board policy or this handbook, please speak with your administrator.

Fairless Local Schools Classified Contract

Fairless Local Schools Certified Contract

Licensure Code of Professional Conduct can be found HERE

Professional Conduct Tip Sheets

#ABConduct TipSheets

#1 - Social Media Tips

Most educators carry smart phones that give them photo, video and texting opportunities and the instant ability to post, like or snap. But these social media opportunities can blur the line between work and personal life.

#2 - Extracurricular Leaders

Athletic coaches, music directors and club advisors make a life-shaping impact on their students, but they also face unique situations. They often spend long hours with students, interact with them outside school and manage public funds. These scenarios present added professional risks.

#3 - Dollars and Sense

The public gives educators a great deal of responsibility to manage public funds. If educators fail to properly manage these funds, even by accident, they can be held personally and professionally liable.

#4 - Drugs and Alcohol

If an educator inappropriately uses alcohol, tobacco or drugs, even outside of school, the educator may be putting his or her license at risk.

#5 - The Top 10 Professional Conduct Concerns

Most educators care about their professional conduct, but they still can make small, avoidable mistakes that lead to larger consequences.

#6 - Testing and Academic Integrity

Educators measure student progress through standardized tests, IEP and ETR goals, and student grades. Accurate reporting is a serious responsibility that can affect students' academic success. If educators fail to accurately measure and report data, their professional licenses may be at risk.

#7 - Rapback and Applications

Ohio educators and the Ohio Department of Education both play key roles in keeping students safe. The Department plays its part by receiving and reviewing updates on new criminal activity of Ohio educators. Educators do their parts by always disclosing their full criminal histories when they apply for or renew licenses.

#8 - Classroom Management and Etiquette

The classroom is a busy place and situations can quickly escalate without notice. To prevent situations from getting out of hand educators should implement positive classroom management techniques.

#9 - Broken Contracts

Ohio teachers, principals, superintendents and others are tasked with providing consistent, stable learning environments for their students. Educators fail to honor this obligation when they terminate their contracts after July 10 of any school year or any time during the school year. In addition to creating uncertainty for their students and districts, it also can put educators' professional licenses at risk.

#10 - Educational Leaders

Interactions between educators, building administrators, district administrators and other educational leaders are necessary for day-to-day operations of Ohio schools. All educational leaders should support and encourage educators to do their best for their students every day. Unprofessional interactions by educational leaders can result in professional discipline and derail even the best education environments.

#11 - Remote Instruction

As Ohio educators rose to the challenging, unexpected circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, many districts transitioned to remote instruction. The following tips can help educators instruct their students remotely while maintaining the highest educational and ethical standards.

#12 - Professional Boundaries and Personal Business

The education community faces new challenges to meet the needs of each child as it navigates remote and hybrid learning. With many educators working from home, the lines between personal and professional time, as well as equipment, may blur. This tip sheet clarifies existing professional boundaries and responsibilities in an evolving environment.

New! #13 - Mandatory Reporting

Ohio educators are mandatory reporters and must serve as champions against child abuse and be familiar with student behaviors that suggest abuse and/or neglect. Educators fail to honor this obligation when they do not immediately report abuse and/or neglect to a children services agency or an officer of the peace where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the age of 18 or person with a developmental or physical disability under the age of 21 has suffered or faces the threat of suffering abuse or neglect.

Announcements

Announcements will be made each day. Special announcements will be read as necessary during the day. Teachers should also check their mailboxes and their email first thing each morning before students arrive and periodically throughout the day when they don't have students.

Appearance and Dress

Since teachers have a great influence on student conduct and actions, it benefits all staff members to model appropriate attire. Staff members are expected to dress professionally every day. Staff members should not wear "jeans" except on designated days. Please review and follow the dress code per the negotiated agreements.

Assembly and Pep Rally Procedures

Teachers are expected to escort their students to assemblies and remain with them during the program.

Teachers should discuss with their students the following procedures before the first assembly of the school year:

1. Cell phones and other electronic devices are prohibited at assemblies.
2. Do not take bookbags.
3. Proceed quietly and promptly to assemblies.
4. If the speaker, performer, or principal asks for your attention, give it immediately.
5. Be courteous to the performer and to your neighbor.
6. Applaud in keeping with the occasion. Applause should be generous and in good taste.
7. No booing or heckling.

At the conclusion of the assembly, remain seated until dismissed. Students will be informed to report to their classes/board buses.

Attendance–Staff

The teacher workday for MS begins promptly at 7:10 a.m. and concludes at 2:40 p.m., High School at 7:15 a.m. and concludes 2:45 p.m. and for ES 8:15 a.m. and concludes at 3:45 p.m.

Teachers must be available in their classrooms or on duty at 7:15 a.m. (HS/MS) or 8:15 a.m. (ES) each day.

If an employee is going to be late or require a last minute call off, the principal must be notified before the start of the work day.

Emergency Leave: If an employee must leave the campus during regular operating hours, he or she is required to let the main office know as soon as possible to ensure classroom coverage.

All absences must also be entered in the employee ESS within 24 hours of the employee's return to work.

Please use the following to determine the length of absence for full-time classified and certified staff (Note that it is the time in minutes, not class periods that matters):

¼ Day	up to 1 hr. 52 mins
½ Day	1 hr 53 mins to 3 hrs. 45 mins
¾ Day	3 hrs. 46 mins to 5 hrs. 37 mins
Full Day	more than 5 hrs and 38 mins.

Part-time staff should consult their administrator to determine the length of absence.

Sub Folder must be turned in by the end of the first week of school to the main office and should be routinely updated for the following:

- Rosters and seating charts
- Daily schedule
    - Time and name of each class
    - List any duties (morning duty, parking lot duty, etc.)
- A set of 5 lesson plans that could be used at any point in the school year (Think of an enrichment activity or a review lesson plan)
- See also **Substitute Folder** section for more details.
- Be sure to share your Google Classroom (Drive at the ES) with the principals to ensure we have access to any lesson plans you may post on the site in your absence.
- Identify one or two students who would be helpful to a substitute.

Leave Request Procedures

Sick Leave

1. As soon as you know of an absence, enter the request in SmartFind immediately to secure a substitute. Personal sick leave and family sick leave, as well as medical appointments are automatically approved.
2. Then, enter the request into ESS, for payroll purposes. You may be asked for proof of appointment.
3. In ESS, be sure to check the box for "sub needed."
4. Sick leave must be entered into the ESS within 24 hours of the staff member's return to work.

Personal Leave

It is advisable to not make a plan such as buying tickets or putting down a deposit based on personal leave being granted until the leave has been approved.

1. Submit the request in ESS first, making sure to check the box requesting a sub.
2. The request must be approved by both the principal and the superintendent before you request a sub in SmartFind.
   *Per the negotiated agreement, there may be some days when personal leave is declined based on the percentage of staff who have planned an absence for the same date. This is done on a first-requested, first-granted basis.
3. You will get an email confirmation approving/denying the personal leave.
4. If the personal leave request is approved, then you can enter the request in SmartFind, making sure you check the box that says, “sub needed.”
5. Please note that personal leave requested immediately before or after an extended break may not be approved by the Superintendent. Please send both the principal and the superintendent an email with the circumstances for your request.
6. Please review and follow the negotiated agreement language regarding personal leave. Leave requests during May must be in accordance with the definition of personal leave and be approved in advance by the Superintendent.

Professional Leave

1. Discuss your professional leave request with your immediate supervisor and submit the professional leave form 3-5 days prior to putting a request into SmartFind or ESS.
2. Submit the request in ESS, making sure to check the box requesting a sub.
3. If the superintendent approves the request, you will get an email confirmation approving the professional leave.
4. Then, enter your professional leave into SmartFind, making sure you request a sub.

Attendance - Students

Attendance should be taken in eSchool within the first ten minutes of each class period. Inform the main office if a student is absent from your classroom for an extended period of time, absent or tardy frequently, or if there is a change in the student’s attendance. The parent will be contacted.

Attendance Procedures

Teachers should take attendance at the beginning of each class period and check their attendance against the daily absentee list. If a student is absent from class and their name does not appear on the daily absentee list, their name should be e-mailed to the attendance office immediately.

Middle School and High School ONLY:

Teachers are responsible for recording and maintaining accurate attendance for each student, including recording instances in which a student is tardy to class. All teachers should follow school policy in terms of dealing with tardiness to school/class. Each student may have three tardies PER SEMESTER before a consequence is assigned. A lunch detention is the consequence that is assigned for the fourth tardy during a SEMESTER. This policy resets with the change from semester one to semester two.

Unexcused Tardy Penalties per SEMESTER:

1 or 2 tardies = no penalty/disciplinary action, warnings *may* be issued
3rd tardy = warning from the teacher and referred to CARE team and grade level TBT
4th tardy = Lunch detention
5th tardy = 30-minute before or after-school detention
6th tardy = 60-minute after-school detention
7th tardy = 60-minutes of detention and parent/student tardy intervention conference held
8th tardy = recommend to principal for 1 day of In-School Suspension
9th or more tardy = additional day(s) of In-School and/or Out-of-School Suspension via recommendation to the principal's office

Attendance for Athletics

Students must be in attendance ½ day in order to participate in any athletic event on that day. Exceptions only with legal or medical documentation.

Make-Up Work/Missed Assessments

Make-up work/missed assessments due to an excused absence must be made up promptly. The time allowed for completion of make-up work should not exceed one day more than the period of absence.

Board of Education Policies

It is the responsibility of each employee to be familiar with all district policies, procedures, regulations, practices, expectations, and job descriptions. Lack of knowledge regarding Board of Education policies and regulations is not an acceptable excuse for failure to follow them.

If you have any questions about Board of Education policies or regulations, please contact the superintendent's office.

Building Access

Staff will have access to the school building using their fobs. There may be some times that the building or part of the building is not accessible. It is the responsibility of the staff member to alert the office of the plan to use the building outside of school hours.

Use of district space must be coordinated through ML Schedules.

The high school building is available to all school groups. Requests for permission to use the facility must be approved by the principal or athletic director and booked into ML Schedules.

Cafeteria

1. Staff is welcome to use the cafeteria for lunch and breakfast. The cost of food is quite reasonable and is approved by the board of education each year.
2. Some staff will be assigned each year to monitor the cafeteria with “lunch duty” on their schedule. However, everyone’s cooperation with the cafeteria rules is required.
3. The cafeteria is to be used by all students during their assigned lunch periods. Do not send students to get their lunch if it is not their designated lunch period. This will cause the students who are assigned to that lunch period to not be able to get their lunch in a timely manner.
4. If food is taken from the cafeteria with staff approval, the adult in charge is responsible for ensuring proper clean up.
5. No food may be ordered and/or delivered to the school for students within one hour of any breakfast or lunch service.

Care of Building/Classroom

Teachers are responsible for the daily care, upkeep, and general condition of their classrooms. The teacher is responsible for establishing and maintaining a warm, inviting, and attractive climate conducive to learning and the emotional development of their students. Please ensure that your room is always neat, clean, safe, and orderly. Strive to minimize unnecessary work for our evening custodial staff. Do not allow students to sit on desks or furniture. Please adhere to the following expectations:

- The room is inviting and brightly decorated.
- Quality student work is displayed throughout the classroom.
- Bulletin boards should be decorated and updated on a regular basis.
- Chairs are organized appropriately.
- Teachers should guard against students marking walls and furniture with their feet, pencils, pens, etc.
- Custodial requests should be forwarded to the office.
- Technology and maintenance issues should be reported via the Help Desk for repair and replacement.
- Staff is not to use adhesive which removes paint or leaves a noticeable blemish on the walls, hallways or doors. Please see the main office for teacher tape.
- **All litter is picked up from the floor each period**.

Cellular Phones, School Phones, and Other Electronic Devices

Teachers are not permitted to use their cell phones during class time with the exception of an emergency. No student should be allowed to use their cell phones or any other personal electronic device. Students may use the phone in the main office if needed.

Staff may have district-owned phones in their classrooms.

Responsible use of the internet on district-owned technology is expected. A user policy will be signed by staff members at the beginning of each school year to ensure the proper use of technology.

Chaperoning

Teachers will be asked to chaperone and supervise various school-sponsored activities throughout the school year. Chaperones are to *actively* supervise the event and immediately confront

inappropriate behaviors. Serious disciplinary infractions should be reported to the administration or sponsor. Chaperones do not need to attend the entire event if:

- the sponsor of the event has been informed of the estimated time of departure and
- the administrator on duty is alerted when the chaperone is leaving.

Classroom Safety and Passes

Students should be engaged in classwork from bell to bell. Students should not be left unsupervised at any time. Follow your building guidelines on hallway usage.

Have a clearly defined policy including a maximum number of passes to/from the classroom.

Child Abuse

All school employees are mandated reporters. Ohio law requires that all school employees report any suspected child abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect. As a mandated reporter you must complete both steps below.

1. Notify your building principal. You will be asked for detailed information when contacting the county agency, and the principal can help you locate this information and make the call with you for support.
   Information you will likely be asked includes the following:
   Student's name,
   Student's address
   Student's date of birth
2. Report your suspicion to the appropriate child protection agency based on the student's residence in most cases.
   a. Stark County Child Protective Services 330-455-KIDS
   b. Tuscarawas County Child Protective Services: If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call TCJFS at 330-339-7791. Select Option 4 from the phone system menu.
   c. Wayne County Children Services: Report Abuse: 330-345-5340 / 1-855-642-4453 (855-O-H-CHILD) Experienced screeners will answer calls about child abuse or neglect 24/7.
   d. Holmes County Abuse and Neglect Line: 330-674-1111
   e. If the student lives in another county, look up the phone number and call.
   f. If there is no answer from the above county agency or if you feel the situation is more urgent, contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

The law provides that individuals reporting child abuse are immune from civil or criminal liability. Reports are confidential. The principal or school counselor would be happy to make the call with you for support.

Chromebooks

Students should have access to a Chromebook if they have signed the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) in Final Forms.

Please encourage students who may have a technology issue to fill out a help desk ticket and return the device to the office. They will receive a loaner in exchange while the Chromebook is repaired.

Students who repeatedly do not have their Chromebook or it is unusable (not charged, not working etc.) will be required to keep the Chromebook in their last period's classroom and pick it up the next day.

Clubs, Activities, and Other Extracurriculars

Teachers are strongly encouraged to sponsor an after school club or organization. All club meetings, extra curricular activities, and practices are to be held before and/or after school. Students will not be excused from classes for these purposes. All staff are encouraged to attend as many school-sponsored activities as possible during the school year. Students truly appreciate your attendance at their school activities.

Meetings and Events

Meetings that occur prior to the tardy bell will be the only time slot which will be approved for clubs, sports, or other organizations to meet unless otherwise specified/approved by administration. Teachers may hold meetings with students during breakfast provided that the teacher has:

1. Pre-arranged coverage of their morning/before school duty.
2. Pre-arranged the availability of meeting room space through ML Schedules.
3. Received permission from the principal as acknowledged by publication in the Weekly Update at least one week in advance.
4. Staff member is responsible for getting notes from any meetings or TBT that took place during the club/activity meeting.

Sunday events, meetings and practices must be approved by the administration. Events which will extend after 10:00pm any day of the week will require principal approval.

Also see **Money (Personal and Fundraising)** for more information.

Confidentiality

State and federal law (FERPA) requires that student education records be maintained as confidential. Individuals who have access to student education records may not remove them from Board property without express permission from their building principal or supervisor. An individual authorized to remove student education records from school property is responsible for the safety and security of the records and for returning them to the district intact. Confidential information and records may not be disclosed except as authorized by Board policy and administrative guidelines. Individuals who have access to confidential information and records while employed by the Board are reminded that their legal obligation to maintain such confidences extends beyond their term of employment in the district and they are prohibited from releasing, disclosing or otherwise disseminating confidential information or records subsequent to leaving the Board's employ.

Since most information concerning a child in school, other than directory information, is confidential under federal and state laws any staff member who shares confidential information with another person not authorized to receive the information may be subject to discipline and/or civil liability. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, grades, behavior, family background, and alleged child abuse.

Custody
Please consult the main office if you are uncertain about student custody issues. The school will follow the most recent Court Documents that are placed in a child's permanent record. If a student or the student's family states there has been a change in custody, please have them send the custody documents to the main office. and let them know we will act upon them after they have been received and verified.

Disaster Plan and Incremental Levels of Crises Plan

Emergency evacuation routes and procedures must be prominently displayed near the door in every classroom, office, and public area. Teachers must ensure that all students fully understand expectations, procedures, and routes for tornado, fire, and intruder alert ("lockdown") drills. For more details, see Crisis Plan.

Special Alert Guidelines:

Refer "strange situations" to the office. This could include drawings, book bags, music, etc. Our policy will be to talk to the student and their family to determine the next course of action. Use team meetings to discuss concerns.

Medical Lockdown is issued when a sensitive medical situation arises during which no student should be in the hallway. Simply retrieve any students from the hallway who may be nearby. Alert their teacher that they are currently going to be in your room for the duration of the lockdown. Shut your classroom door and continue as normal with normal classroom routines. If the dismissal bell or end of class bell rings, please keep students in the classroom until an "all clear" announcement is made.

If the "LOCKDOWN" announcement is made, A.L.I.C.E. protocol will be followed. ALICE training will take place early in the school year to ensure staff and students know when to evacuate and when to barricade.

Fire Drill: Fire drills will be conducted according to state guidelines. Complete procedures are outlined in the Crisis Management Plan (abbreviated version follows).

1. Review fire drill routine with students. Please take time to discuss proper procedure.

2. Post fire drill route in the classroom.

3. During a fire drill:
    a. Close the door to the classroom;
    b. Close all windows;
    c. Turn off the lights;
    d. Exit the building quietly;
    e. Check attendance against your class roster.

4. Remind students who are in the hallway that they are to go with the person in charge. Students in the restroom should leave by the nearest exit and join their class group outside of the building. Staff without a scheduled class should exit the building as if there is a fire.

<u>Tornado Drill:</u> Tornado drills will be conducted according to state guidelines. Complete procedures are outlined in the Crisis Management Plan (abbreviated version follows).

1. Take the students to the assigned area and review the TORNADO DRILL procedures.
2. Post the floor plan indicating the assigned tornado shelter areas.
3. Tornado drill procedures:
   - Teachers should take their students to the assigned area.
   - Occupied rooms should have WINDOWS and DOORS closed.
   - Adults who do not have homeroom students may use any designated area.

Discipline And Dismissal From Class

As an educator you have a responsibility to plan learning activities and to act quickly on disturbing factors which disrupt or detract from the learning situation, wherever it is. Attempt to handle a situation so that the student will not be embarrassed. Act quietly and deliberately. Be courteous and firm. Make your instructions specific and clear. Parents should be notified as soon as possible if their student is being disruptive or not completing course work.

Drug Policy

Refer to the Drug Free Workplace Policy.

Faculty Meetings and School-Wide Staff Development

All teachers, full-time and part-time, are required to attend all regularly scheduled faculty meetings and professional development. Teachers need to be on time and present at TBT meetings.

Field Trips

Field trips, when used for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program. Properly planned and executed field trips should:

1. Supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment outside the schools.
2. Inspire new interests among students.
3. Help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world outside of school.
4. Bring the resources of the community–natural, artistic, industrial, commercial, governmental, educational–within the student's learning experience.
5. Afford students the opportunity to study real things and real processes in their actual environment
6. Be properly planned, integrated with the curriculum, evaluated, and followed up by appropriate activities which enhance its usefulness.

Students may be charged fees, including, but not limited to, admission fees, for district-sponsored trips.

The following should be addressed when planning a field trip:

1. Applications for an educational field trip must be submitted to the principal at least one month in advance of the trip;

2. Written parental permission is to be obtained before any student leaves the district on a trip;
3. Field trips must be properly monitored by district staff members;
4. The staff member in charge will notify the school nurse to obtain a copy of each student's Emergency Medical Authorization Form.
5. Provisions must be made for the administration of medication to those students for whom medications are administered routinely while at school.
6. Provisions must be made at the trip destination and in transportation, if and when required to accommodate students and/or chaperones with disabilities.
7. The transportation for all field trips is to be by vehicles owned or approved by the district and driven by approved drivers. Transportation for field trips is to be booked using MLSchedules. Exceptions must have the approval of the Superintendent. All students are expected to ride the approved vehicle to and from each activity. A special request must be made to the staff member or sponsor by the parent, in writing or in person, to allow an exception.
8. Any time students are on the vehicle, at least one (1) sponsor, chaperone, or staff member is expected to ride in the vehicle as well as to supervise students upon return to the district and while they are waiting for rides home.

Bus drivers are prohibited by state law from making any stops that are not on the trip itinerary. A professional staff member shall not change a planned itinerary while the trip is in progress, except where the health, safety, or welfare of the students in his/her charge is imperiled or where changes or substitutions beyond his/her control have frustrated the purpose of the trip. In any instance in which the itinerary of a trip is altered, the professional staff member in charge shall notify the administrative superior immediately.

Fundraisers

All fundraisers must be approved through the principal or if related to athletics through the appropriate athletic channels. The administration will only allow one fundraiser to be in progress at any given time. Students may not participate in fund-raising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults.

Grading and Reporting

A teacher's grading system serves to motivate and to challenge each student to strive toward maximum educational growth. The system shall be administered fairly and should be easily interpreted by students, parents, certificated staff, and other authorized personnel.

Students shall be graded according to their achievements. Grades are essentially a measure of achievement, not necessarily of ability. Grades shall be the result of teacher evaluation of students based on, but not limited to, classwork, homework, quizzes, reports, tests, projects, and the professional judgment of the teacher.

The standard grading scale for determining the letter grade is as follows:

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

With the exception of College Credit Plus courses, students and their families should be able to access their current grades through the Home Access Center. Teachers are responsible for keeping grades up to date and should record at least two grades per week on average.

Teachers should return graded assignments in a timely manner and before report cards are sent home. Any student receiving a failing quarter grade must have had contact made by the teacher with their family prior to the report card being mailed. This contact could include a variety of media including email, phone conversations, virtual meetings and in-person meetings during which the teacher explained the student's potential failing grade and recommendations of actions taken by the student which could improve their grade in the future.

Situations which may warrant an incomplete grade need to be approved by the principal before being issued. Incomplete grades must be made up before the interim report is sent for the next quarter.

Guest Speakers

Teachers are encouraged to enhance their programs and lessons with knowledgeable, entertaining guest speakers. Teachers are encouraged to use qualified community members for guest speaking purposes. Topics discussed must be relevant to the learning standards being addressed at the time. Notify the building administrator one week prior to inviting a guest speaker to school. Guest speakers must register in the main office upon arrival and must wear a visitor's badge at all times while in the building.

Homework

Homework should enhance learning objectives. To be effective, homework should be a meaningful, planned, and coordinated activity, varying in content and quantity from department to department and teacher to teacher. In order to maintain homework objectives, students must take responsibility, parents should offer support, and teachers should have adequate time to assess homework performance.

1. Homework should be a properly planned part of the curriculum, extending and reinforcing the learning experience of the school.
2. Homework should be meaningful, at a student's independent work level, and should reinforce skills learned in class.

Lunch (Employee)

The school cafeteria offers a variety of items including salads and daily entrees. Food service prices are set by the Board of Education. Employees are not allowed to charge in the cafeteria.

Lesson Plans

Teachers are required to prepare written lesson plans in an I do, We do, You do format prior to teaching. Access to the lesson plans must be available to the principals in Google Classroom (OR Drive) on the Monday prior to the week ahead although changes may occur and teachers are encouraged to reflect on their lessons and improve or change them as needed. Lesson plans are used for OTES and to drive quality instruction. It is important that lesson plans align to the rigor of the Ohio Learning Standards, OSTs, and locally provided professional development.

See also **Substitute Folder** section for more details.

Licensure

All teachers are personally responsible for maintaining a current/valid license to teach and for renewing their professional teaching certificates **before** they expire. *The school district is not legally allowed to pay teachers with expired or invalid teaching certificates.*

Teachers are encouraged to print their license out and post near their desk in an area that will serve as a visual reminder of the expiration date.

Resident Educators–see section on Mentors for your renewal information.
This applies to teachers who have a Resident Educator, Alternative Resident Educator, Teach for America Resident Educator license from the Ohio Department of Education.
Professional Educator's Responsibility

Applies to any teacher who holds a professional, senior professional or lead professional license from the Ohio Department of Education
In order to fulfill your requirements to the LPDC Committee:

1. How to set up your IPDP through the employee ESS for the LPDC can be found by clicking here.
2. Before taking classes, create your IPDP and submit for approval.
3. Before registering, paying, or taking any classes, be sure to get approval from the LPDC through emailing them at lpdc@fairless.sparcc.org.
4. Take necessary hours for credit

*Renewal Requirement is the equivalent of **one** of the following:*

6 semester hours
18 Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
180 Contact (clock) Hours

Semester hours, CEUs and Contact Hours may be combined. Below are some examples for illustrative purposes.

Combination of Units Examples:

3 semester hours + 90 Contact (clock) hours
9 CEUs + 3 semester hours
9 CEUs + 90 Contact (clock) hours

Conversion Chart for Credit Hours

i. 10 Contact hours = 1 CEU
ii. 3 CEUs = 1 Semester hour

5. Keep your own original records in a paper file for your own reference, and submit all work through the ESS to the committee in a timely manner (IPDP, CEU's, Transcripts).
    a. CEUs completed that will be used for renewal
    b. New or update IPDP

6. Apply for renewal of your license at least a month before the expiration date.
7. Fill out a new IPDP after the renewal of each license and begin again at step 1.

- **New certified employees must complete a new IPDP within the first 30 days of employment.**

Mail and Mailboxes

Intra-school mail will be put in the faculty room mailbox for teachers or the main office for other staff. Staff should check their mailboxes on a daily basis at minimum. Mailboxes should be emptied by staff daily and not used as storage. Staff needing lower or higher mailboxes need to alert the secretaries to the request no later than the first day of school. Otherwise mailboxes are issued in alphabetical order.

Inter-school (intra-district) mail or mail going to other schools in Stark County should be placed in the mailbox for the district office in the high school main.

Staff should never use prepaid postage envelopes paid by the district or school-affixed postage for personal mail.

Maintenance Requests

If you have a request for repairs or maintenance regarding your classroom or the facilities, enter a Help Ticket located on the district website under Staff or by emailing helpdesk@fairless.sparcc.org.

Medication

The school nurse and authorized personnel are the ONLY staff members who can dispense prescription and non-prescription medications to students. Please send students to the office to receive medication. A care package of bandaids, and disposable gloves are provided at the beginning of each school year. If you are in doubt as to whether or not to give something to a student, do not give the item but send them to the main office.

Mentors and Resident Educators (Faculty)

https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Resident-Educator-Program/For-Resident-Educators

Money– Personal and Fundraising Cash

Teachers should not keep school money in their classrooms. The school will NOT be responsible for any money that is lost or stolen from a classroom. Money can be brought to the office and locked in the safe for safe keeping. State law requires that schools deposit all money on a daily basis.

Teachers/Advisors must follow procedure for fundraising. Prior to a fundraising event the proper forms from the secretary must be filled out and approved by the Principal. It is the responsibility of the teacher/advisor to keep an accurate account of bills paid and money collected. The treasurer will not

approve purchase orders or contracts for accounts that lack the necessary funds or have less than the necessary funds to cover the purchase.

Cash Receipts

All money collected for activities, fundraising, etc., is to be deposited on a daily basis with the treasurer. No money shall remain in the classroom. The negligence of this practice could result in the loss of money and disciplinary action. Money should not be kept in a teacher's desk, file cabinet or taken home. Receipts must be produced in duplicate copy for accounting purposes.

Movies

During non-instructional time

Due to copyright infringement, movies may not be shown as a fundraising endeavor for a school-based organization. A school-based organization may show a movie if it ties into a school-initiative like character education or supports a positive aspect of the school's culture and climate. Careful planning of the event must also include activities that incorporate the school initiative showing a clear connection between the movie's content and the initiative it supports. Organizations may charge for concessions served during the movie.

During Instructional Time (class period)

Prior to showing a movie clip(s) during instructional time, the following protocols should be in place:

1. Meet with your department chair, discuss the appropriateness of the movie, and identify the movie's direct correlation to the curriculum.
2. Any movie rated PG or PG-13 must be approved by the principal. Movies rated R must be approved by the principal and also have a permission slip signed by parents.
3. Carefully watch the entire movie and be sure that it is age appropriate.
4. Showing full-length movies is not acceptable and is also a possible violation of Fair Use for copyright.

Orientation/Open House

All teachers, aides and tutors are scheduled to attend Open House and Orientation. Please notify the principal in advance if you are unable to attend.

Parking

Park in staff designated areas on a first come, first served basis. Staff with documented mobility needs may park in handicapped spaces with a valid placard.

Parental Rights and Notification Policy (HB 8 Compliance)

To ensure compliance with Ohio House Bill 8 (HB 8), effective April 9, 2025, and to support transparency and parental involvement, the following language is recommended for inclusion in your district's teacher handbook

1. Overview

In alignment with Ohio House Bill 8, also known as the “Parents' Bill of Rights,” our district is committed to upholding parents' fundamental rights to make decisions concerning the upbringing, education, and care of their children. This policy outlines the procedures for parental notification and involvement in matters related to student health, well-being, and instructional content.

2. Notification of Instructional Content

- **Sexuality Content Disclosure:** Prior to providing instruction that includes sexuality content, teachers must:
    - Inform parents about the upcoming instruction.
    - Provide access to review any instructional materials.
    - Offer the option for parents to excuse their child from such instruction and provide alternative educational activities.

Note: "Sexuality content" is defined as any oral or written instruction, presentation, image, or description of sexual concepts or gender ideology provided in a classroom setting. This does not include instruction on sexually transmitted infection education, child sexual abuse prevention, or sexual violence prevention education as required by state law.

3. Student Health and Well-Being

- **Parental Notification:** Teachers and school personnel are required to promptly notify parents of any significant changes in a student's:
    - Mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.
    - Services or monitoring related to the student's health.
    - Request to identify as a gender that does not align with the student's biological sex.
- **Prohibition on Withholding Information:** School personnel must not encourage or coerce a student to withhold information from their parents regarding their health, well-being, or identity.

4. Health Care Services

- **Annual Notification:** At the beginning of each school year, parents will receive information about all health care services offered at their child's school, including:
    - Physical, mental, and behavioral health services.

    - The option to withhold consent or decline any specified service.

- **Parental Consent:** Parental consent is required before providing any health care services to a student, except in emergency situations or as required by state or federal law.

5. Released Time for Religious Instruction

In accordance with HB 8, students may be excused from school to attend religious instruction if the following conditions are met:

- Written consent is provided by the parent or guardian.
- The religious instruction is conducted off school property.
- The student is responsible for any missed schoolwork.

6. Addressing Parental Concerns

- **Filing Concerns:** Parents may file a written concern with the school principal regarding any topic addressed in this policy.
- **Resolution Process:** The school will address the concern within 30 days. If unresolved, parents may request a hearing before the district's board of education.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conference attendance is a required part of a teacher's contractual obligation. Staff who are absent, will be required to enter sick or personal leave in ESS. In the event that a teacher cannot attend a Parent-Teacher Conference, the principal must be notified in advance and accommodations must be made to reschedule conferences and/or make time available for parents who want to have a conference. Teachers are required to keep, sign, and turn in an accurate log of all parents who attend conferences throughout the year.

In order to help a student, you may ask a parent to come to the school for a conference. It is also quite possible that a parent will ask for a conference with either an individual teacher or a group of teachers. It may be wise to consider some of the following points during the conference:

1. Listen to the parent's concerns and try to understand their viewpoint.
2. Never argue, yet answer questions directly and in a straightforward manner.
3. Try to find some strengths and achievements in the student.
4. Suggest a plan of action.
5. Refuse to listen to parental complaints about other faculty members.
6. Do not discuss other students even if the student and the parents bring them up in the conversation.
7. Maintain a positive approach throughout the conference.

Planning Periods

Planning periods are provided so that you may use the time to prepare for your classes, communicate with parents, and meet with colleagues. You have an obligation to the students and school during that time. You may be asked to cover another teacher's class if the need arises. Teachers must be available for parent conferences during their planning periods. In rare circumstances it may be necessary to leave the campus during your planning period. Inform the secretarial staff if you need to leave during your planning period.

Press Releases and Media

Any official press release will come from the superintendent's office. Teachers who have significant items for the press should submit them to the principal. Please submit items that celebrate student and staff accomplishments often!

All news releases for publication are to be submitted to the principal for approval.

If asked by a media outlet for a statement or opinion in regards to a school matter, refer them to the superintendent's office. Refer to the Licensure Code of Conduct Tip Sheet #1 regarding appropriate use of social media.

Professional Evaluations

Professional evaluations for teachers will be conducted according to OTES guidelines if applicable and the negotiated agreement between the FEA and Board of Education.

Other evaluation instruments will be used for staff not covered by OTES.

Pupil Permanent Record Folders

Pupil Permanent Record Folders are maintained for each student. These files are kept in the office. Teachers needing to view a file must sign the access sheet located in the office. Student files must not be taken from the office without a signature. They should not be removed from the building or stored in the classroom overnight.

Purchase Orders

All requests for purchases need to be made through the principal(s) or the secretary. Contact the main office if a purchase order is needed. Do not purchase items before a purchase order has been approved.

Student Supervision

Supervision is an integral part of the instructional program of the school day. Student supervision is the duty of all staff members. Teachers have a special responsibility for a given group but are expected to assist with the discipline and guidance of all students in the building.

1. Teachers are to be in their respective classrooms prior to the tardy bell for homeroom.
2. Teachers must assume responsibility for the conduct of all students during change of classes. Teachers should be in the doorways of their classroom or moving through the hallways at these times. Teachers should also make periodic checks of restrooms and other congested areas.

3. Any teacher who leaves a student(s) unsupervised in a classroom is acting unwisely. A teacher may be considered negligent and held responsible for any accident which occurs during the teacher's absence.
4. **Staff must use the pass system in place.**
5. A staff member will report immediately to a building administrator any accident, safety hazard, or other potentially harmful condition or situation detected.
6. Each staff member will immediately report to the building administrator knowledge of threats of violence by students.
7. A staff member will not send students on any personal errands.
8. A staff member will not inappropriately associate with students at any time in a manner which may give the appearance of impropriety, including, but not limited to, the creation or participation in any situation or activity which could be considered abusive or sexually suggestive or involve illegal substances such as drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
9. ***If a student approaches a staff member to seek advice or to ask questions regarding a personal problem related to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health, and/or family relationships, etc. The staff member will attempt to assist the student by facilitating contact with certified or licensed individuals in the district or community who specialize in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the student's stated problem. However, under no circumstances should a staff member attempt, unless properly licensed and authorized to do so, to counsel, assess, diagnose, or treat the student's problem or behavior, nor should such staff member inappropriately disclose personally identifiable information concerning the student to third persons not specifically authorized by law***.
10. A staff member will not transport students in a private vehicle.
11. Pursuant to the laws of the state and Board Policy 8462, each staff member will report to the proper legal authorities immediately, any sign of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Teacher-Based Teams

The purpose of a TBT is to facilitate data discussions and instructional planning to positively impact students' growth. The basic component of TBTs is cooperative planning based on data review. It is important that all teachers on the team are present, on time, and fully involved in the process.

School Cancellation

During inclement weather, announcements about school closing will be made on ParentSquare, WHBC (1480 AM or 94.1 FM) and television stations, including WKYC (channel 3), WEWS (channel 5), or Fox (channel 8). You may also check the Fairless Local Schools website. An automated telephone call will be placed by the superintendent to notify personnel about a school cancellation.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Intimidation.

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Harassment, sexual harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any

gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while enroute to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student, or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or function, including but not limited to field trips or athletic/ co-curricular events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business. To see the complete policy, please go to our district website and read Board Policy 5517, 5517.01, and/or 5517.02. For situations involving potential Title IX sexual harassment, see also the District's Title IX Policy, found in Board Policy 2266 and Administrative Guidelines 2266.

Title IX Anti-Harassment Compliance Officer
Julie Weyandt
Curriculum Director
800 7th Street SE
Brewster, OH 44613
julie.weyandt@fairless.sparcc.org
(330) 767-3577

Smoking Policy

Smoking on school district property is strictly prohibited. The use of any tobacco-related product on school property or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited.

Social Media

Teachers should refrain from communicating with students via social media and utilize discretion when posting information about school on their personal sites. Staff should only communicate with students and parents through ParentSquare.

Special Education

It is a teacher's legal responsibility to provide all accommodations identified in IEP and 504 plan documents for students in their classroom. If a special education student receives an "F" in your class, you may be asked to submit documentation supporting the grade.

Substitute Folder

Every teacher is required to have assembled a substitute folder that must contain, at a minimum, the following information turned into the Main Office by the end of the first week of school.

1. Updated class list/roster with at least one responsible/helpful student noted
2. Current seating charts
3. Attendance procedures (beginning of day and every period)
4. Bell Schedule and Schedule of Classes
5. List any duties–when and where the substitute will need to be or secure another staff member to cover the duty.
6. Lesson Plan–detailed and explained and where or how students may access directions and where they will turn in their final product at the end of the class period (example Google Classroom or similar learning management system)
7. A minimum of 5 days of review or enrichment activities which could be done at any time that you are unable to create a lesson plan.

Transporting Students

Student transportation should occur via district owned and operated school bus, student's family vehicle, or student transporting themselves.

Staff should never transport any student at any time.

Visitors

The Board of Education welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents, other adult residents of the community, and interested educators. In order for the educational program to continue undisturbed and to prevent the intrusion of disruptive persons into the schools, it is necessary that those desiring to visit sign in and obtain a visitor's pass in the attendance office before entering the building. Staff are not permitted to have personal visitors (spouses, children, etc) during the school day due to school safety procedures.

Please escort any unfamiliar individuals to the main office for check-in and a Visitor Pass. Staff members are requested to enforce this practice for the protection of all.

Fairless Local Schools

2026-2027

Staff Handbook & Student Handbook Recognition of Review

I have read both the Staff and Student Handbooks and understand the expectations laid therein.
I agree to support and abide by the rules, guidelines, procedures and policies of
the Fairless Local School District.

Staff Name (please print): _____

Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____